

STOURPORT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1925.

GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour to present my 33rd Annual Report—a Survey Report as defined in paragraph 13 of circular 540 of December 18th, 1924, issued by the Ministry of Health.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area : 1624 acres. Population : Census 1921 - 4778, 1925 - 4910.

Number of Inhabited Houses 1921 - 1258.

Number of Families or Separate Occupiers 1921 - 1248.

Rateable Value - £20,653 12s. 6d.

Sum represented by a penny rate - £71 2s. 6d.

Physical Features and General Character of the Area.

The district overlies the new red sandstone, the subsoil being very porous, sand and gravel. It is separated from the Martley Rural District by the River Severn and bounded on the other sides by the Kidderminster Rural District and the Droitwich Rural District. From Newtown and Burlish there is a gradual descent to the Rivers Severn and Stour, the land adjacent to the Rivers being liable to floods. The houses in the main streets are chiefly those of shop-keepers, the rest are of the villa and cottage type, the occupiers being employed at the various factories. Alongside the River Severn a number of wooden bungalows were erected before the area was included in the district—1920—on water logged soil which is liable to floods. In January some of the bungalows in the Lickhill Meadow were surrounded by floods and the floors submerged while in the Redstone Area the water covered the floors more than a foot deep and the occupiers had to be rescued in boats and temporarily housed in the Town Hall until the floods subsided.

Local industries include an Iron Foundry, a Carpet Factory, a Rug and Curtain Factory, Tin Stamping and Enamelling Factory, a Vinegar Brewery, a Tannery, a Motor Body Factory and—in course of erection—an Electric Power Station. The water traffic is considerable as the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal here joins the River Severn and gives employment to a number of persons. There are about 1000 acres of farm land. The average wage is high and until the slump in trade since the war there was remarkably little poverty in the district.

General Provision of Health Services in the District.

Hospitals provided or subsidised by the County Council or the Local Authority.

Tuberculosis: Provided by the County Council.

Maternity: None.

Children: Open air school provided by the County Council.

Fever: Though all cases of Scarlatina have been treated at home for several years there is an arrangement for the reception of such cases at the Kidderminster Borough Hospital if necessary.

Small-pox: A similar arrangement for the reception of cases of this disease exists with the Kidderminster Corporation for which a subsidy is paid annually. But other arrangements are being considered by the County Council which suggest treatment of all cases in the County being treated at a central hospital.

The Kidderminster Infirmary is the general Hospital to which most of the patients needing institutional treatment go though a certain number attend the Birmingham Hospitals or the Worcester Infirmary.

Ambulance Facilities. Arrangements exist for the conveyance of infectious cases with the Kidderminster Corporation. For non-infectious cases a Red Cross Ambulance is available day and night.

Professional Nursing in the Home. The Stourport & Wilden District Nursing Association provides a fully trained Nurse who attends to the sick poor and others who apply for her services. She also attends the 5 schools when they are visited by the School Medical Officers; visits homes of school children notified as having dirty heads; pays about 100 visits monthly in connection with maternity and infant welfare and about 20 visits a month to Tuberculosis cases. For all this work the County Council pays the Nursing Association £58 per annum. The Association also receives subscriptions from the Kidderminster and Droitwich Boards of Guardians and from some Friendly Societies. The District Council was willing to subscribe to this most useful form of Health Service but the Ministry of Health refused their consent—for some technical—and as it seemed to the Council—altogether inadequate reason.

There are 4 Midwives practising in the District: they are supervised by the County Council.

Chemical Work is dealt with at the County Laboratory.

Vital Statistics.

Births :	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate ...	50	34	84
Illegitimate ...	1	3	4
Totals ...	51	37	88
Birth Rate	17.9	England and Wales	18.3

The lack of houses affects the Marriage Rate and consequently the Birth Rate.

Deaths: Males 31. Females 42. Total 73.

Death Rate 14·8 England and Wales 12·2

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of Childbirth - 1.

Deaths of Infants under the age of one year per 1000 births:—

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate ...	2	3	5
Illegitimate ...	—	1	1
Totals ...	2	4	6

Infant Mortality Rate 56·3 England and Wales 75·

The rate of Infant Mortality in the District is approximately one third of that when I was appointed Medical Officer of Health in 1893.

Cancer. Nine deaths were due to Cancer during the year. In the last 5 years 53 persons have died in the district from this disease out of a total number of deaths registered - 313,

Causes of Deaths in Stourport U.D. 1925.

<i>Causes of Deaths</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
All Causes (Civilians only) ...	31	42
Measles ...	1	—
Scarlet Fever ...	—	1
Whooping Cough ...	—	2
Influenza ...	1	1
Tuberculosis of respiratory system ...	2	4
Other tuberculous diseases ...	—	1
Cancer, malignant disease ...	3	6
Diabetes ...	1	—
Cerebral hæmorrhage, &c. ...	1	6
Heart disease ...	6	5
Arterio-sclerosis ...	1	—
Bronchitis ...	5	2
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	—	3
Other respiratory diseases ...	—	1
Appendicitis and typhlitis ...	—	1
Acute and chronic nephritis ...	2	1
Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition ...	—	1
Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth	1	1
Suicide ...	1	—
Other deaths from violence ...	2	—
Other defined diseases ...	4	6

Legislation in Force. Acts Adopted.

- 4th December, 1889. Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889,
4th February, 1891. Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.
4th March, 1891. Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, parts
 2, 3, 4 and 5.
14th March, 1910. Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907,
 Section 94 relating to Pleasure Boats.
13th August, 1921. Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907, Part
 VI. relating to Recreation Grounds.
7th February, 1922. Public Health Acts, Amendment Act 1907,
 Section 95, relating to purchase &c. of land.
In 1926. Parts II., III., IV. & V. Public Health Act 1925 adopted.

Byelaws. During the year New Byelaws with respect to New Streets and Buildings were under consideration by the Council and these were approved by the Ministry of Health and adopted by the Council in March 1926.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply. The Council has an agreement with the Bewdley Corporation—dated March 6th, 1913—for the supply of water for 33 years with the option to renew for another 33 years by giving at least 2 years' notice. The supply not to exceed 135,000 gallons in any 24 hour day. The Price is $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. per 1000 gallons and if more than 20 million gallons are taken in one year the price to be $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per 1000 gallons over that quantity.

The supply is constant and of excellent quality and 1099 houses were supplied from this source in 1925 in fact, nearly every house within a reasonable distance of the mains. The rest of the houses are dependent on wells—some of them shallow wells—but no illness attributable to pollution has occurred.

Rivers and Streams. No serious pollution of the rivers or streams takes place in the district. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is collecting information on this matter.

Drainage and Sewerage. The Bridge Street area—76 houses—and part of Mill Road—8 houses—still use the old sewers, engineering difficulties having prevented their inclusion in the Sewage Scheme which deals with—approximately—90 per cent of the houses. The sewage is dealt with at Titton Sands Farm on the broad irrigation system with very little nuisance as the soil is peculiarly adapted for the purpose. About 20 privies still exist in the district, the majority because of the distance of the houses from the sewers. In the bungalow area pail closets are in use and the contents removed regularly by the Council Staff, No other satisfactory method is practicable in the circumstances.

Scavenging. This is regularly and systematically carried out: ashbins are emptied in the town once a week, in the outlying parts of the district once a fortnight and ashpits as required. Ashbins—720 are replacing ashpits—87— throughout the district every year.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The report of the Sanitary Inspector, which is appended to this report, deals with this subject in detail.

Smoke Abatement. No complaints have been received nor has any nuisance been observed.

Other Sanitary Conditions requiring Notice. Complaints are still occasionally received from the inhabitants of Newtown and the Bewdley Road of a nuisance arising from the Kidderminster Sewage Farm

Schools The sanitary condition and water supply of the schools are satisfactory. There has been an unusual amount of epidemic disease among the children during the year. In January Mumps was epidemic, in February Influenza, in July Measles, in November Influenza again became epidemic and in December Chicken-pox and Whooping Cough.

I was in frequent communication with the School Teachers, paid many visits to the schools and received reports from the teachers with whom I discussed the influence of the epidemics on the health of the scholars and the effect on their receptive powers. There seems to be no doubt that the crowding together of children during epidemics is prejudicial to the public health leading to severe illnesses among some and impaired health—often prolonged—among many. The teachers tell me that poorly children do not benefit by teaching except to a limited extent and it is probable that rigid exclusion of all children—and teachers—suffering with colds would eventually prove satisfactory from every point of view.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The Food and Drugs Acts are administered by the County Police. All Food Shops, Bake-houses and Slaughter-houses are under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector who visits regularly and at unexpected times. All butchers shops are now protected from contamination by dust by windows.

The milk supply is provided partly by Dairies within the district and partly by others in adjoining districts and is generally of good quality. Graded milk can be obtained at 2 milk shops in the district. At the end of the year there were 10 Cowkeepers, 12 Cowsheds, 6 Dairies, 84 Cows in the district. The whole of the Dairies and Cowsheds are visited and inspected regularly by the Sanitary Inspector and with two exceptions found satisfactory: the defects were remedied.

School Closure during 1925.

Boys' School	-	January 5th to January 19th	-	Mumps
		February 26th to 7th March	-	Influenza
		July 17th to July 31st	-	Measles
		(affected Classes only)		
		November 25th to December 11th		Influenza
Girls' School	-	January 5th to January 19th	-	Mumps
		February 26th to March 7th	-	Influenza
Juniors and	-	February 26th to March 7th	-	Influenza
Infants		July 17th to July 31st	-	Measles
		November 25th to December 11th		Influenza and Whooping Cough
St. John's	-	March 2nd to March 7th	-	Influenza
		July 20th to July 31st	-	Measles
		November 9th to December 31st		Whooping Cough

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

Tuberculosis.

The Scheme supervised by the County Council applies to this district: patients are sent to a Sanatoria or receive Dispensary treatment—at Kidderminster—or home supervision.

New Cases and Mortality during 1925:

Age Period.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...							
1	...		1					
5	...							
10	...	1						
15	...	1				2		
20	...	2				2		
25	...	1						
35	...							
45	...				1			
55	...				1			
65 upwards								
Totals	—	5	1	—	2	4	—	—

Other Notifiable Diseases.

Scarlet Fever	...	19	Death	...	1
Diphtheria	...	1			
Pneumonia	...	7		...	3
Erysipelas	...	3			
Chicken pox	...	18			

Scarlet Fever. Cases occurred throughout the year among school children but do not appear to have been connected with school attendance for they were distributed among children from several schools and all parts of the district. The type was generally mild and of slight infectivity. One case was fatal.

Diphtheria The only case notified was a child attending Wilden School— not in this district—where other cases occurred.

Pneumonia Of the cases notified one was possibly tubercular and the majority of the others were secondary to measles or whooping cough : it is doubtful if the notification of such cases is intended.

Other Infectious Diseases.

Mumps was epidemic during the early months of the year, the type was generally mild and an unusual percentage of adults was affected.

Influenza was epidemic from January to April inclusive and in February widespread : the type was not severe and there were only 2 fatal cases. In October an epidemic began—as it did last year—with cases of a mild type which became more widespread and severe in November and gradually died down towards the end of December. The difficulty of controlling the disease is practically insurmountable among adults who are in constant contact at the factories, in the trams and at places of entertainment. The necessity of earning a living induces many who ought to be in bed to go to work and incidently infect others.

Measles was epidemic in July : fortunately the type was mild and only one child died.

Whooping Cough was epidemic in Newtown in December, the type was fairly severe and two children died.

Chicken-pox was epidemic in December.

Housing.—General Housing Conditions in the Area.

General Housing Conditions. The general housing conditions compare favourably with those of any other town of the same size and age : there are a certain number of houses of back to back type which would eventually be replaced or altered when there were other houses for the inhabitants to go to. There is a list of over 100 applicants for Council houses.

During 1921 and 1922 forty-eight houses (20 parlour type and 28 non-parlour type) were erected on a most suitable site, now called Park Crescent, under the Housing & Town Planning Act 1919. The original scheme was so altered by the Housing Commissioner that for the sake of economy a very inferior result was obtained to that which was intended.

The architect—Mr. J. Pritchard—writes "May 1919. We prepared a lay out of this site and plans for 46 houses, all parlour type, as instructed by the Council. All brick built similar to those carried out at the West top corner of the site—the best houses on the site.

August 1919—We prepared another lay out of all parlour type houses viz: 19 pairs, 2 blocks of three and 1 block of four, all to be built to our plans. Then the Housing Commissioner appears on the scene and insisted upon the bulk of the houses being built in concrete and also decided that certain types of houses designed by the Ministry of Health should be used. We therefore had to make another lay out plan and this time the number of houses was to be 48 made up of 9 pairs of our original parlour type houses in brick (2 pairs of these were afterwards altered by the Commissioner to concrete) 2 blocks of three 1 block of four and 10 pairs of non-parlour type houses in concrete to the Ministry's design. Personally we think that the scheme was impaired by the alterations though some cost was saved. If the original scheme had been carried out you would have had a group of houses equal to any we have seen anywhere. It was my suggestion when the last scheme was fixed upon that some non-parlour type houses should be put up for workmen and to save cost but, if we had had our own way they would have been built in brick and to our own design."

So that it is obvious that the Ministry of Health are alone responsible for the erection of a collection of drab looking houses of forbidding aspect and cramped interiors which are no credit to anyone and a disappointment to the Sanitary Authority.

In 1925, 15 houses non-parlour type were erected (7 in Minster Road and 8 in Warwick Street) under the Housing etc. Act, 1923.

Total erected by the Council 63.

By private enterprise with subsidy under the Housing Act, 1923,
erected in 1924 - 5 1925 - 2. Total - 7.

Certificates have been granted in respect of a further 13 houses some of which are now completed and others in course of erection.

The Council have a Scheme under the Housing Acts whereby, in addition to the subsidy, persons building houses may obtain advances from the Council up to 90 per cent of the value, the loans being repayable over twenty years.

In 1925 the Council made an offer to purchase a field bounded on one side by Minster Road and another by Manor Road so that no expense beyond making house connections for sewage, gas and water would have been incurred as sewers, gas and water mains already existed. The Scheme was turned down by the the Ministry of Health because the price of the land was considered excessive by about £400. The Council then negotiated for the purchase of a site on the Bewdley Road and this purchase has been sanctioned by the Ministry of Health.

This Scheme, however, necessitates the making of roads with sewers, water and gas mains; when the site is fully developed only 80 housing sites will be available as compared with 100 on the Minster Road field; and the total outlay is likely to be at least £1000 more than would have been needed for the provision for a larger number of houses, in a more convenient position, for tram and railway service. It is proposed to build—as a first instalment—9 pairs of non-parlour houses and 2 pairs of parlour houses on the site approved by the Ministry.

Venereal Disease.

The County Council Scheme applies to this district but though no data are available there is reason to believe that very little venereal disease exists in the area. Patients can attend at Centres in Kidderminster and Worcester and other centres such as Birmingham - at times published. The total number of cases attended at the Kidderminster Infirmary in 1925 was 67 of which a very small percentage may fairly be considered to belong to this district as that Institution caters for an extensive area.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

Duties in connection with this important service are undertaken by the Stourport District Nurse who is supervised by the County Medical Officer and members of his staff.

In concluding this report may I be allowed to express my deep personal sense of the loss sustained by the death of Mr. G. H. Fosbroke, the County Medical Officer of Health. During the 33 years I have been Medical Officer of Health to the Stourport Urban Sanitary Authority his advice and support have been invaluable in the somewhat difficult duties of a part-time Medical Officer of Health and his invariable courtesy and interest resulted in a friendship which can never be forgotten.

Finally I wish again to acknowledge the cordial co-operation of the Clerk and the Members of the Health Committee and last but not least the untiring support of the Sanitary Inspector.

Your obedient servant,

June 1st, 1926.

E. STANLEY ROBINSON.

INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

INSPECTOR'S OFFICE.

May, 1926.

To the Stourport Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report of Sanitary and other work done during the year ended December 31st, 1925.

During the year 154 cases of nuisances or infringements under the various Acts, Bye-Laws and Regulations were found, as compared with 234 cases during the year ended December 31st, 1924, being a reduction of 80 cases on the previous year. The whole of the 154 cases were dealt with partly by verbal request, partly by preliminary notice and

in a small degree by final notice. Of the latter cases it was only found necessary to ask for and issue two notices. The whole of the work required to be done was carried out in a satisfactory manner. There were no outstanding Statutory Notices at the end of the year,

Notices for the Abatement of Nuisances.

During the year 81 Preliminary Notices were served upon owners and occupiers for the abatement of nuisances, as compared with 117 Preliminary Notices for the year ending December 31st, 1924, showing a reduction of 36 on the year.

Public Health and Housing Acts.

In compliance with regulations and orders of the Ministry of Health systematic inspection has been carried out from time to time during the year, and 445 premises were inspected.

Infectious Diseases (Notification & Prevention) Acts.

Forty Five cases of Infectious Disease were reported to the Medical Officer of Health during the year as compared with 77 cases during the year ending December 31st, 1924, showing a decrease of 32 cases in the year. The cases notified were:

Diphtheria	...	1	against	4	for 1924.
Scarlet Fever	...	19	„	63	„
Tuberculosis	...	7	„	9	„
Chicken-pox	...	18	„	0	„
Totals	...	<u>45</u>		<u>76</u>	

The whole of the cases were visited and disinfectants were supplied as required during the time each case lasted.

Premises were disinfected after Cancer in 1 case, Diphtheria 1 case Scarlet Fever 19 cases and Tuberculosis 6 cases.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

At the end of the year there were 10 Cowkeepers, 12 Cowsheds, 6 Dairies, 84 Cows, Wholesalers 8, and 14 Retailers of Milk in the district. The whole of the Dairies and Cowsheds have been visited and inspected and found satisfactory except two cowsheds. Notice was given each owner, with the result that both the cowsheds were put in order.

Diseases of Animals Acts.

No case of disease under the above Acts was reported during the year.

Slaughter Houses.

At the end of the year there were 2 registered and 6 licensed Slaughter houses in the district. These have been visited from time to time during the year and have been found satisfactory.

Factory and Workshops Acts.

At the end of the year there were 35 Workshops in the district. 64 visits were paid to them, and 2 contraventions were found and dealt with as nuisances. The work required to be done was carried out in a satisfactory manner.

The following are the workshops in the district :

Bakers	...	...	7	Milliners	...	...	2
Boat Builders	...	...	2	Motor Car Body Builders	...	...	1
Cycle Repairers	...	...	2	Motor Repairers	...	...	4
Dressmakers	...	...	3	Saddlers	...	...	2
Joiners	...	...	5	Wheelwrights	...	...	1
Boot Repairers	...	...	6				
Total							35

No complaints have been received from the Factory Inspector during the year. No case of homeworker has come under my notice, and no list of outworkers has been received during the year.

Complaints.

Twelve complaints of various matters have been received during the year, and were inquired into, and action taken where required.

Water Supply.

The consumption of water during the year amounted to 36,619,000 gallons as compared with 34,500,000 gallons for the year ending December 31st, 1924, showing an increase of 2,119,000 gallons.

The consumption of water by Meter was 5,860,000 gallons as compared with 6,747,000 gallons for the year ending December 31st, 1924, showing a decrease of 887,000 gallons.

Canal Boats Acts, 1877. 1884.

During the year ending December 31st, 1925, the arrangements made—as in previous years—for the inspection of Canal Boats consist of visiting the canal and basins once in each week and inspecting such boats as may be lying in the canal and basins. In addition to this weekly visit, canal boats are inspected at every opportunity. Under these arrangements 47 Canal Boats were inspected during the year as compared with 66 in the previous year. Of the 47 boats inspected one required repainting and went into dock the same day. The remaining 46 boats were found to be in accordance with the Acts and Regulations.

No case of sickness or infectious disease was met with on any of the boats inspected.

The whole of the boats inspected were manned by men, and in no case were there any women or children found on board.

This Authority is not a Registration Authority for the purpose of the Canal Boats Acts.

Summary of Work done during the Year ending December 31st 1925

Housing and Town Planning Acts.

Premises visited and inspected	...	...	...	445
Notices served	...	...	...	81
Works in progress, visits thereto	...	...	...	42
Meetings of, and visits with, owners	...	...	...	18
" agents	...	...	...	21
Number of houses, the defects in which were remedied without Closing Orders	...	...	...	180
Cases of overcrowding abated	...	...	...	2
Number of houses erected	...	...	...	17

Infectious Disease.

Number of cases of Notifiable Diseases reported	...	...	...	37
" visits thereto	...	...	...	48
" premises inspected	...	...	...	23

Improvements carried out as a result of Inspection and Notices served.

Number of houses cleansed	...	...	...	72
" " " after Infectious Disease	...	...	...	37
" floors repaired	...	...	...	12
" floors relaid	...	...	...	—
" walls repaired	...	...	...	10
" walls rebuilt	...	...	...	—
" roofs repaired	...	...	...	18
" chimneys repaired	...	...	...	8
" firegrates repaired	...	...	...	9
" firegrates renewed	...	...	...	4
Externals walls taitred or otherwise treated	...	...	...	2
Windows made to open	...	...	...	10
Pantries lighted and ventilated	...	...	...	8
Pantry floors repaired or relaid	...	...	...	—
Gutters and downspouts repaired	...	...	...	16
" " removed	...	...	...	—
Dangerous buildings demolished	...	..	...	—
Number of dust-bins provided	...	...	...	12

Sculleries, Water Closets, etc.

Number of sculleries limewashed	...	...	...	8
" scullery floors repaired	...	...	...	4
" " relaid	...	...	...	—
" washing boilers repaired or renewed	...	...	...	6
" sinks and sink wastes fixed	...	...	...	4
" W.C.'s limewashed	...	...	...	—
" W.C. floors repaired	...	...	...	—
" W.C. floors relaid	...	...	...	—
" additional sculleries provided	...	...	...	—

House Drainage.

Number of drains laid or relaid	...	...	21
„ „ trapped and ventilated	...	...	21
„ tested	...	...	21
„ obstructed drains cleared	...	...	10
„ inspection chambers provided	...	...	21
„ „ „ with interceptors provided	...	...	21
„ W.C. pedestals fixed	...	...	18
„ additional W.C.'s provided	...	...	18
„ privies converted to water closets	...	...	3
„ „ with fixed receptacles	...	...	42
„ „ with movable receptacles	...	...	64
„ fresh water flushed closets	...	...	906
„ hand flushed	...	...	—
„ waste water flushed	...	...	—

Paving.

Paving to yards repaired	—
Number of paved approaches to outbuildings provided	...	...	—

Other Nuisances.

Number of cases of pig keeping abated	...	...	3
„ accumulations of manure removed	...	...	4

Scavenging.

Number of houses from which refuse is removed	...	...	1307
„ ashpits emptied	...	...	932
„ dust bins emptied	...	...	23548
„ loads removed	...	...	1478
„ cesspools emptied	...	...	15
„ privies	...	...	69
„ middens	...	...	6
„ pails	...	...	88
„ loads removed	...	...	133

Water Supply.

Number of houses supplied from water mains during the year	...	...	1099
„ houses with contaminated supplies dealt with	...	...	—
„ wells closed	...	...	—

Slaughter Houses.

Number registered	...	...	2
„ licensed	...	...	6
„ cleansed and repaired	...	...	8
„ of inspections made	...	...	48

Factories and Workshops.

Number under supervision	...	...	...	35
„ of inspections made	...	...	...	64
„ of insanitary conditions	...	...	...	—
„ dealt with as nuisances	...	...	...	2

Dairies and Cowsheds.

Number of purveyors of milk	...	...	...	9
„ dairies registered	...	...	...	6
„ contraventions dealt with	...	...	...	2
„ cowsheds in district	...	...	...	12
„ milking cows in district	...	...	...	84
„ inspections made	...	...	...	30

Unsound Food.

Amount surrendered as unfit for human consumption	...	55 lbs.
Amount destroyed	...	55 lbs.

Legal Proceedings.

Number of convictions obtained with respect to insanitary conditions	—
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Clerical Work.

Number of Preliminary Notices served	81
„ Statutory Notices served	2
„ „ complied with	...	...	2
„ „ outstanding	...	...	—
„ Official Letters written	...	...	149

Conclusion.

In concluding my report for the year 1925, I beg to acknowledge gratefully the cordial co-operation of the Health Committee, the Medical Officer of Health, and the Clerk, in the discharge of my duties as Sanitary Inspector, etc. during the year.

I am.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE J. EDMUNDSON.

Printed by Order of the Council,

A. D. CAPEL LOFT.

Clerk to the Council.

